# Pius XI: Supreme Teacher and Universal Father

MOST REV. AMLETO GIOVANNI CICOGNANI

Catholic Hour Radio address delivered by the Apostolic Delegate to the U. S., May 30, 1937.

FOR more than fifteen years Pius XI, from the Apostolic Chair of St. Peter, the Chair of Truth and the Center of Charity, has labored and taught as the supreme Teacher and the universal Father. The years of his pontificate enter into the twenty centuries of the history of the Catholic Church with a series of accomplishments of such importance to humanity as to stand comparison with those of the most illustrious Pontiffs. It is a fact indelibly imprinted that every time that Pius XI has spoken—in his allocutions, Encyclicals, documents of every kind—his teaching has exerted a profound influence in every corner of the globe, has been received with filial devotion by Catholics, and with admiration by all. What is the reason for such world-wide attention and reverence?

Divine is the mission of the Pope and his word, whether paternal or doctrinal, bears the seal of truth, the firmness of holiness, the stability which is the characteristic of eternal principles, the universality of the most ardent and disinterested love. When Pius XI has spoken he has never had in view earthly ends or human calculations, but exclusively "the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ": 1 his words have resounded with fatherly outspokenness only to proclaim immutable principles, to champion the rights of the persecuted, to alleviate the pains of the oppressed, to save immortal souls, to point out the ways of righteousness, truth, justice, love, peace. For this reason not only the 350,000,000 Catholics, but all have felt that in the person of Pius XI the "Teacher of the Nations" speaks, and in these messages where time and eternity were meeting, they have sensed Divine accents.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Encyclical Ubi Arcano, December 23, 1922.

#### HE IS GUARDIAN OF TRUTH

Indeed his teaching office and his fatherhood are not human things. Holy Scripture teaches us that God "who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world." The son of God, become man for our salvation, completed Divine revelation, founded the Church, One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic; to Her He confided the guardianship of Truth, preached by Him, the means of salvation, and in order to continue His work of Redemption He constituted His Vicar on earth, to whom He promised His assistance even into the end of time.

The Sovereign Pontiff—whatever his name may be—has been there in his Apostolic Chair for 2,000 years now, with the same doctrine inherited from Jesus Christ, with the same fatherly heart which Our Lord required as a condition for feeding His flock.<sup>3</sup> Whosoever knows the true religion, understands this Divine Mission of magisterium and ministry, proved by so many arguments of written and oral revelation

and by innumerable facts of history.

But to everyone it is given at least to verify a fact that would not find adequate explanation in the ordinary appraisal of human values. How many changes and what vicissitudes in the history of peoples have taken place, even if restricted to a few centuries: Thinkers, philosophers, statesmen, rulers of nations have recourse from time to time to new theories and systems. Rapid changes succeed each other in culture and civilization, in literature, in the arts, in commercial practice, and even the inventions of genius become antiquated with time and have to be brought up to date.

## THE TRUTH REINVIGORATED

If the doctrine of the Pope were simply a human product, it would undergo the common fate. In fact long since it would have had not only to undergo changes, but dissolution and eclipse, because it has been in a thousand conflicts, in the fury of persecution and heresy. And such opposition, far

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Hebrews I, 1, 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> John XXI, 15, 17.

from producing the least fissure in the deposit of dogmatic and moral truths, of which the Pope is the custodian, defender, and teacher, has served only to reconfirm and reinvigorate the truths themselves. The real secret of all this lies in the fact that Christ said to Peter and through him to his successors, "Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." 4

Upon these solemn words is based the strength of the Papacy; by them the Man-God has founded the dynasty of the Popes. He has desired it to be well-founded on a solid rock, as enduring as the human race. Pius XI is the two hundred and sixty-first of this glorious dynasty: thirty-three of his predecessors died martyrs, others died in exile, others had to endure dreadful struggles, as for example Leo the Great, Gregory the Great, Gregory VII, Innocent III, Boniface VIII, Pius V, Pius VII. But their names are held in hallowed memory, and does not Pius XI continue to exercise gloriously the divine mandate?

Will it be said that, while progress is made in our systems, in the sciences, in the manner of giving assistance to people, the Church alone remains static and for that reason

finds itself in conflict with modern times?

## HAS INITIATED VARIETY OF PROTECTS

The works, the monuments, the writings left by the successors of St. Peter speak for themselves. But so eloquently do the works of Pius XI speak that it is not necessary to recall the past, no matter how glorious. The work of Pius XI far from being exhausted in the performance of his exalted ministry, has been exerted in such a variety of new projects and undertakings as to compel general admiration and gratitude. His program is to further "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever just, whatsoever holy, whatsoever lovely, whatsoever of good fame, if there be any virtue, if any praise of discipline." 5

In the field of studies Pius XI desired that the Catholic universities should be adapted to the needs of modern times; with the wise regulations outlined in the Apostolic Constitu-

<sup>4</sup> Matt. XVI, 18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Philippians IV. 8.

tion Deus Scientiarum Dominus, he gave a noble standard to sacred studies. It was only on the seventh of last March that approval was given to the Constitutions of the Catholic University of America. He built a great number of central seminaries, furnished with everything necessary and useful; not a few of these for the exclusive benefit of particular nations, like the Ethiopian, located in Vatican City itself, and, in the city of Rome, the Russian, the Ruthenian, the Roumanian, the Brazilian; and, because of its significance and object, special mention must here be made of the new Propaganda College, a real university city, where are gathered together youths belonging to thirty-five nationalities.

All these seminary buildings are magnificent, and imposing from an artistic standpoint. And a solemn monument he has constructed for all of them of the highest spirituality, which I should like to call "The most noble and most useful seminary for the clergy and society," that is the wonderful Encyclical of the twentieth of December, 1935, on the Priesthood. In it is set forth to the last detail how ecclesiastical students must prepare themselves for their mission, in virtue, in studies, according to the needs of the time in order to honor God and the Church and be of assistance to their

neighbor and to society.

## CATHOLIC CHURCH EVER THE SAME

It would take too long to enumerate the various important centers of culture founded by Pius XI; let it suffice to mention the Institute of Christian Archæology which permits one to see at first hand how the Catholic Church of today is the same as that of the first centuries, with the same sacraments, the same doctrine, and the Ethnological Missionary Museum of the Lateran which offers a visible and tangible record of the customs and history of peoples and of the most remote tribes.

The Vatican Library, enriched by Pius XI with precious collections, and the Vatican Archives have been scientifically arranged and modeled on the type of the Library of Congress at Washington. He erected a noble building for the Vatican Gallery. In the Villa at Castel Gandolfo he founded a new Observatory and Astrophysical Laboratory, and not

<sup>6</sup> Of the 24th of May, 1931.

only wished that in his city a radio should not be lacking but had the most perfect one possible installed. The world was startled when by means of the Marconi waves the Holy Father, on the twelfth of February, 1931, addressed to all the nations his first message of benediction and peace. More than once since we have heard his paternal voice in this country, and from afar we have rejoiced to feel ourselves so near to the common Father.

#### ESTABLISHES ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Just at present on the occasion of his eightieth birthday, the Holy Father will inaugurate the Pontifical Academy of Sciences previously announced. He knows what a contribution Science makes to human thought and has wished to have at his side this scientific senate. In selecting the members he has not looked to difference in faith but has authoritatively affirmed by fact that a life of study pursued without bias is well spent and has rewarded this homage of the intellect to God, the author of human intelligence. Six of these Papal Academicians are American citizens, and this should be a reason for joy and gratitude on the part of this nation.

The moral and material value of such undertakings attest how great is the solicitude of Pius XI for all progress made by the intellect. It is easy to understand that the greater part of his work is accomplished in his ordinary daily administrative duties, in the exercise of charity, in paternal solicitude for every class of persons, and escapes for the most part the eye of the public. While this has reference to the affairs of the world, if you wish to term it so, everything in the intention of the Holy Father is connected with and directed to the greater glory of God and His Church. Time and eternity meet in his activities in a beautiful and sublime harmony.

#### COMBATS ATHEISM

The great battle in which the world is engaged today is between atheistic Communism, on the one hand, and all those spiritual and moral values, on the other, of which the Church is the defender and solicitous promoter. But why do I say the Church? I should say the human race. For this reason no sooner had the Supreme Pontiff recovered from his recent

illness than he made his appeal in his Encyclical *Divini Redemptoris*, against this enemy that goes on insinuating itself with every kind of means and tactics, to the individual classes of society, to the States and their functionaries, to all men of good will, in order that they may unite in a unanimous defense against atheism, and lend active cooperation for the restoration of a just social order, and for those legitimate reforms which may aid the needy, alleviate the lot of the laboring classes, and save Christian civilization, the only "civitas" that is truly "humana."

The Holy Father says openly that among the graver reasons for the diffusion of this supreme disaster have been the religious, moral and economic abandonment in which the masses were left, the world-wide economic crisis, the antagonism of races and nations. All this is deplorable; it is imperative to repair the disaster, to correct, reconstruct; and Pius XI in his warm appeal to rulers and subjects has sol-

emply affirmed the rights of man.

#### HUMANITY MARCHES ROAD OF BELIEF

Humanity, since man has been man, has marched on the road of belief in God, in the recognition and reverence for that sanctuary that we call the family. Wherever there is any human vestige, even the most remote, this is corroborated. And every time that the creature has pretended to attribute to himself divine rights or restrict them to matter, to the world or to one race, the consequence has been chaos

and confusion, misfortune, ruin.

Atheistic Communism is absolutely determined on forcing humanity to make a diabolic turn in the road constantly followed by it and on wresting from it its greatest heritage, the belief in God. Many may have been deceived notwithstanding the destruction, the terrorism, and the anarchy of which we are witnesses. But it is an undeniable fact that the great majority of the human race believes in God and worships Him, desires the family to be strong and pure, desires youth to be wholesome and decent, desires for all, bread and protection, desires that the labor and toil of millions of citizens receive just compensation, desires that all cooperate in the common good, and that those whose duty it is assume

<sup>7</sup> Encyclical Divini Redemptoris of March 19, 1937.

these responsibilities, without which human society cannot be saved.

Pius XI, following in the footsteps of his predecessors and the teaching of Jesus Christ, has repeatedly proclaimed these principles. Last March he reaffirmed them to the world, clearly and solemnly, in three Encyclicals, an added glory to his wise paternity. His teaching, at once old and new, is the teaching of life, in perfect agreement with the demands of natural right, made for man whose soul is naturally Christian, answering to the needs, obligations and rights of the human race.

The teaching of the Pope does not grow old because God does not grow old, and because man will always have the need that cannot be denied him of love, of truth, of holiness, of peace. The well-being and the life of man consist in these things in time and in eternity.

These truths are congenial to the American people and the nations know how well they correspond to the aspirations of the citizens of this great country. Its Constitution guarantees to all freedom of conscience. A great citizen of this nation, Cardinal Gibbons, wrote "The American people possess, in a marked degree, the natural virtues that are the indispensable basis of supernatural life. . . . A people that yield so readily loyal obedience to human laws, will not set their face against divine revelation when its imperious claims are clearly and cogently set before them." 9

On this happy occasion of the eightieth birthday of the Holy Father universal is the homage directed to him. Homage that is true and real is that of listening to the voice and following the admonitions of the Teacher and Father.

## LET US PRAY FOR HIM

Let us honor the Vicar of Christ. Jesus Christ Himself has honored him: He established and proclaimed him the firm unshaken rock. He placed him before all the Apostles; He wished him to be with Him in the great manifestation of His Divinity, a witness of the most glorious deeds.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Encyclical of March 14, 1937, on the Situation of the Catholic Church in Germany; Encyclical of March 19, 1937, against Atheistic Communism; Encyclical of March 28, 1937, on the Religious Situation in Mexico.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Cardinal Gibbons, The Ambassador of Christ (in the preface).

Let us pray for the Pope. Christ Himself prayed for Peter. "I have prayed for thee." 10 To pray for him is to unite oneself to his holy intentions, all directed to the wel-

fare and to the salvation of men.

The august name of Pius XI is surrounded with most pure glory. It is the glory of heaven, because there participate in it more than thirty Saints and over 300 Beatified raised by him to the honors of the altar. It is the glory of doctrine and wisdom; the universities, the centers of study founded, favored and developed by him are the splendor of this glory, and it is increased by the figures of four wise men, Albert the Great, John of the Cross, Peter Canisius and Robert Bellarmine, whom he enrolled among the Doctors of the Church.

#### PROMOTES CATHOLIC ACTION

This glory has shone in the expositions of world-wide interest for the history of civilization, such as the Vatican Missionary Exposition and that of the press. This glory is daily evident in the fertile fields of Catholic Action, desired and promoted by Pius XI; in these fields Catholics of every age and social class offer generous cooperation and assistance of every kind to the clergy in the works of re-

ligion, education and charity.

This glory many nations have affirmed and decreed by ententes and concordats in order to secure for themselves a more solid basis for development of moral solidity. This glory is reflected in distant mission lands evangelized in the name of God, and shines forth brightly in the Orient, the Near East and the Far East, on which Pius XI has showered treasures of his wisdom and paternal charity. In the three holy years celebrated by Pius XI the peoples of the whole world have testified to this glory by betaking themselves to Rome to hear his living word. This glory has been confirmed repeatedly by solemn Eucharistic Congresses, historic manifestations of faith in the Holy Eucharist and a tribute of homage to the Legates of the Sovereign Pontiff.

May the Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, the glory of our century, continue for a long time his work of love and of

peace.

<sup>10</sup> Luke XXII, 32.

# Pope of the Workingman

MOST REV. JOHN A. DUFFY, D.D.

Pastoral Letter (A Testament of Pope Pius XI to the Workingman)
issued by the Bishop of Buffalo commemorating the Holy
Father's eightieth birthday, read in all the churches
of the diocese May 30, 1937.

TODAY [May 31, 1937] the entire Catholic world celebrates the eightieth birthday of the great Pontiff, Pope Pius XI—a scholar internationally known—a diplomat of world renown—yet this and future generations will revere Pope Pius XI as the supreme exponent of Social Justice, and the tireless champion of the rights of the workingman.

During the sixteen years of his Pontificate, Pope Pius XI has faced the most appalling problems ever offered to a great world leader. An eyewitness to the chaos, social, political and religious—the aftermath of the great War—Pope Pius saw at once the world drift toward anarchy, and endless conflict among nations. Providentially raised to the Papacy he began to lay the foundations for a Christian Reconstruction of the Social Order.

In a series of letters addressed to the mind and heart of humanity, His Holiness unfolded the most significant religious and social program of the new age. With a masterly grasp of principles that has evoked universal admiration, even from those outside the Faith, this great Pontiff defined the Constitution of States, the Ideals of the Family, and the Christian Education of Youth. Men everywhere recognize in him the authentic spokesman for the Christian solution of the world's problems. By universal consent His Holiness is the most significant figure on the contemporary scene. His written and spoken word, his high personal character and moral influence make him the central figure in all progressive world movements. With increasing earnestness social-minded leaders are turning to him as the one embodiment of mankind's "hope of unity in the bonds of peace."

The great achievements of Pope Pus XI have won for

him a long series of glorious titles. He is rightly called the "Scholar-Pope," and no less rightly the "Pope of the Missions, of Science, and of Catholic Action"; but the title he merits beyond all doubt or question is "Pope of the Workingman."

#### INTEREST IN WORKERS

Dramatic proof of his ruling passion for the toilers of the world was given in the midst of his present grave illness. In the very shadow of death, when what he would say might be his last message, when what he would write might be his last will and testament, he addressed himself, in pain and suffering, to "the multitude whom Jesus loved"—the workers of the world.

Men who labor and are heavily burdened will note the statement of Pope Pius XI on the wealth of the few and the

poverty of the many:

The immense number of propertyless wage-earners on the one hand, and the superabundant riches of the unfortunate few on the other, is an unanswerable argument that the earthly goods so abundantly produced in this age of industrialism are far from rightly distributed and equitably shared among the various classes of men. (Quadragesimo Anno.)

Observe the fierce earnestness of the Pope's demand for a living wage for the individual and the fathers of families:

Every effort must be made that fathers of families receive a wage sufficient to meet adequately family needs . . . intolerable, and to be opposed with all our strength, is the abuse whereby mothers of families, because of the insufficiency of the father's salary, are forced to engage in gainful occupations outside the domestic walls, to the neglect of their own proper cares and duties, particularly, the education of their children. . . . Social Justice demands that by union of effort and good will such a scale of wages will be set up . . . as to offer to the greater number, opportunities of employment and suitable livelihood. (Quadragesimo Anno.)

# SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR ALL

At the basis of the Pontiff's thought for the security of the worker is the principle of ownership and security:

Social Justice cannot be said to have been satisfied as long as workingmen are denied a salary that will enable them to secure proper sustenance for themselves and for their families; as long as they cannot make suitable provision through public or private insurance for old age, for the periods of illness and unemployment. (Atheistic Communism.)

The instrument for securing for the worker a just and living wage is the union of workingmen. Again and again the Pope returns to the right of the workingman to organize for the promotion of his interests:

While readily recognizing and patronizing similiar organizations amongst other classes, with criminal injustice they denied the innate right of forming associations to those who needed them most for self-protection against oppression. (Quadragesimo Anno.)

In ringing tones he demands Justice not Charity. He speaks of the hollow semblance of Justice that doles out charity and prolongs "hand-to-mouth" uncertainty. He envisions a day when worker and employer will strive together for the common good:

It is of the essence of Social Justice to demand for each, all that is necessary for the common good; and this done, each individual in the dignity of his human personality is supplied with all that is necessary and there will come to be an intense activity in economic life as a whole pursued in tranquillity and order. (Atheistic Communism.)

#### DUTIES OF GOVERNMENT

He appeals to Government to address itself to the sacred duty of ending unemployment:

The State must take every measure necessary to supply employment, particularly for the heads of families and for the young. . . . Measures taken by the State with this end in view ought to be of such a nature that they will really affect those who actually possess more than their share of capital resources, and who continue to accumulate them to the grievous detriment of others. (Atheistic Communism.)

In this great charter of liberty for the worker proclaimed by Pope Pius XI he does not patronize the toiler by telling him only of his rights, but reminds him that in a reconstructed social order, the workingman has duties, too. All are partners in the work of bettering human conditions and every right implies a corresponding duty. The Peace of Christ in the Kingdom, of Christ, is the grand objective towards which all efforts must be directed. Worker, employer, and the government must work together; granting rights, accepting duties, sharing generously in a common prosperity.

All who love Justice and hate iniquity, will unite in prayer and praise of Pope Pius XI on his eightieth birthday.

The universal Church extols him as the great man of the age. The workers of today, and tomorrow, will enshrine him in their hearts as one who saw the problem of labor most clearly, and pointed the way toward a Christian Social Order in which Prosperity and Peace shall be guaranteed to all.

On this great anniversary of his birth we join with our Catholic brethren throughout the world and with all men

of good will, in the ancient prayer of the Church:

"The Lord preserve him and give him life, and make him blessed upon earth, and deliver him not up to the will of his enemies."

# **Guilds of Medieval Days**

Reprinted from the Catholic Observer, Pittsburgh.

IN spite of the varying conditions in the Middle Ages, it is not too much to say that, materially, the position of the journeyman was at least equal, if not superior, to that of the workman today. It was undoubtedly better morally. He sometimes assisted in the drawing up and execution of the laws of the community. He was his master's companion in ideas, belief, education, and tastes. Above all, there was the possibility of rising one day to the same level. Any attempt to raise wages by combination was condemned under the pretext that it would make everything dearer, and was punished by fine and imprisonment. This would tend to dissociate guilds from the modern trades unions and the idea that the trades unions are the modern survival of the guilds. In those days women had an economic independence such as is hardly to be met in our own times. In many countries she possessed, for instance, the power to dispose of her property without her husband's permission.

Women's guilds, organized and administered like those of men, were in existence. They existed in exclusively feminine crafts. Fifteen of them were to be found in Paris alone towards the end of the thirteenth century, in the dressmaking industry and among the silk workers especially. There were also the mixed crafts—that is, crafts followed by both

men and women—which in Paris numbered eighty. In these, a master's widow had the right to carry on her husband's workshop after his death. In 1263 the bakers of Pontoise attempted to take it from the women, under the pretext that they were not strong enough to knead the bread with their own hands; their claims, however, were dismissed by an ordinance of Parliament. Although there was a tendency to keep them in an inferior position for life, women in those times had a fair amount of freedom; for them, as for children, exhausting and killing days of work were yet to come.

The officers of the guilds acted as arbiters, not only in quarrels which arose between members, but also in the conflicts which in the great merchant guilds might arise in the course of trade even with foreigners—disputes over weights and measures, bankruptcies, frauds, reprisals, etc. They were in effect public officials. In the industrial guilds they had to watch over production and inspect the articles of manufacture in the workshops, to make sure that they were in conformity with the prescribed rules. In cases of delinquency they had the right to seize and burn the goods, and to inflict a fine on the offenders. It was their duty to protect the apprentices, to examine the candidates for mastership, and to provide the necessary funds for the pious works which were under control of the guilds.

The guilds appear to have had three essential aims: The economic aim, a social and moral aim, and a political aim.

The economic aim comes first in time and importance. The guilds were primarily a fighting organization for the defense of the trade interests of those who belonged to them. Members were jealous of both the welfare and honor of their craft. Their ideal of attainment was the satisfactory regulation of production and sale. They aimed at control of their members for the double purpose of a fair living to the worker and a good standard of workmanship. They tried also to fix prices, but as this might savor of attempts to control the market against the consumer, it could only be done indirectly and secretly. They did, however, fix wages. The principle of good workmanship was genuinely desired, and everything was done to secure the reputation of the guild in this respect. The doctrine of saveat emptor is of modern growth, and would have been repudiated by any respectable body of craftsmen, however much individuals tried to cheat. The second ruling idea of the guilds was the pursuit of moral and social aims. They desired to prevent the great from crushing the small, the rich from ruining the poor, and, in order to succeed, they tried to make advantages and charges equal for all. Their motto so far was Solidarity. Thus every member was forbidden to buy up raw material for his own profit. If the arrival of fresh fish, hay, wine, wheat or leather was announced, no one might forestall the other and buy cheaply to sell dearly; all should profit equally by natural course of events. The cornering of the supply of labor was also forbidden.

The ties of unity between guildsmen were strengthened at regular intervals by guild feasts and banquets, and the ordinary dryness of the statutes was redeemed by rules of real brotherhood. The merchant or craftsman found in his craft guild security in times of trouble, monetary help in times of poverty, and medical assistance in case of illness. At Florence, the carpenters and masons had their own hospital. When a member died shops were shut, everyone attended his funeral, and Masses were said for his soul. In short, within a single guild all rivals were also confreres in the full and beautiful sense which the word has now lost.

These rules of brotherhood were often accompanied by moral and religious rules; the guild watched over the good conduct and good name of its members. To be received as a master, it was necessary almost everywhere to make a profession of the Catholic Faith, and to take the oath in order that heretics such as the Patarine and Albigenses might be kept out. Punishments were inflicted on blasphemers, players of games of chance, and even usurers.

The religious functions of the guilds were important. They were regarded as essential and strictly observed. Later on many guilds supported shrines and priests to serve them, and gave generously to the pious object of prayers for the souls of deceased members. Connected with the religious side of the organization was the custom of arranging pageants and plays for the delight and edification of the townsfolk. Much time, money and ingenuity were spent on these and the various incidents depicted were allotted to various trades. The vintners would present The Marriage at Cana; the chandlers, Star in the East; the shipwrights, The Building of the Ark; the armorers showed Adam and Eve driven from

Paradise; while the fishers and mariners provided the Flood.

The political influence of the guilds varied according to two main factors: the degree of independence of the towns in which they existed and the nature of the crafts of which they were composed. If the guilds lived under the domination of an energetic and neighboring power the guilds only took a secondary place, and this is perhaps the reason why it has been possible for the greater number of French historians to leave them in the background; but they became powers of the first order if they developed in surroundings where their expansion was not interfered with.

Human nature was not to be denied, however. As the guilds became stronger the masters and merchants of the guilds became fabulously rich, and lived lives of luxury in the palaces which they built for themselves, and they exercised tyranny over the weaker members of the guilds.

# St. Ignatius Loyola

GERALD G. WALSH, S.J.

An address delivered before the students of Fordham University on the occasion of the Four-hundredth Anniversary of St. Ignatius Loyola's Ordination to the Priesthood.

WHEN Peter Paul Rubens, the greatest painter ever educated in a Jesuit college, thought to put on canvas Ignatius Loyola, the father of all Jesuit colleges, he represented the saint standing, vested as a priest, with eyes lifted up to God in prayer, and holding in one hand an open book resting on a low but solid column.

The face of the saint in that masterpiece, which is now in England, in Warwick Castle, is lifted up to Heaven. There is no conventional halo about the saint's head, such as you might find in an ordinary pious picture; but the artist has been able to convey, by way of light and shadow, the impression of a soul rapt in communion with God. The face of the saint is lit with a divine light. The eyes seem to be looking through the veils of space and time into a supernatural world of light and love and Everlasting Life. As in all high and Christian art, the stuttered syllables

of lines and colors spell out, to the mind, a message from the world of Mysteries. Here, you may say to yourself, is not just a man but a mystic; not just a soldier but a saint; not just a human being, but one sharing in the Life of God. "Wisdom reposes in his heart"; wisdom in the sense of Eternal Wisdom, of the indwelling Life of the Holy Ghost, has

made an abode in the temple of his heart.

But this mystic saint, with eves lifted up to Heaven stands, as Rubens sees him, vested as a priest. He is wearing a red chasuble; red, the color of martyrdom, of sacrifice, of dedication, of devoted love. And yet, just a plain priest. There is no violence done to history. There is none of the conventional emaciation that you might have looked for. On the contrary, the Ignatius of Rubens is wide-shouldered, ample in body, robust, a regular Basque, just as Ignatius really was and ever remained, in spite of the unflagging labors of his priestly life. In that broad chest, you feel, a big heart. A man, you say to yourself, born to be a lover; a lover, whether on the level of human romance or on that of religious and supernatural vocation. A real hidalgo, the Inigo Loyola who even as a page in the court of Juan Velasquez de Cuellar set his heart on the hand of a daughter of the King of Spain. But also, the lover who put his sword and spurs aside, and kneeling there on the ground, high up in Montserrat, kept his vigil of prayer and penance before a statue of the Oueen of Heaven.

You know what it means to be a lover? It means to take one's heart, as Mary Magdalene in the Gospel story took her vase of precious ointment, to take one's heart and break it at the feet of some one we adore. To be a lover means to have a heart overflowing with affection; and to love means to pour it out, drop by drop, to the very dregs, like

wasted wine or precious perfume.

And so we repeat the text with a new emphasis: "Wisdom reposes in his heart"; a saint, then, of soul and heart, a mystic and a priest, a man of wisdom and of love, of vision

and of sacrifice.

The left hand of Ignatius in Rubens' masterpiece is holding an open book. It is a page that stands out from the canvas like a challenge to the world, like the unfurled banner of a medieval knight; a symbol of his soldierhood; an open profession of his loyalty to Christ. Across the top of

the page is written the motto of the soldier saints: "Ad majorem Dei gloriam"; and below, like a brag of the brave Basque capitan that he was, these words: The campaign of Christ the King is on, and is calling for recruits. Are you willing to enlist? Then, be ready, day and night, to march. Be ready, like a soldier to pay your debt of loyalty." "Ready" and "Glory." Those were the "words of his mouth." They are the words of a soldier.

The open book in Rubens' picture is resting on a low but solid column; as though to say, the banner of the soldier was hoisted on a rock. It was not enough to paint Ignatius as a mystic, as a priest, as a soldier. There was in him the element of reason, of obedience to law and conscience, the element of prudence.

There, then, you have Ignatius Loyola in his fulness. "Wisdom reposes in his heart, and prudence in the words of his mouth." He was built, as it were, in four dimensions; he was four-square. He was like that stout castle that still stands over there in Guispuscoa, where he was born. A saint, a priest, a soldier, and a citizen. A man of supernatural Life, of love, of loyalty, and law. A man of vision, of passion, of courage, and conviction. A man, you might think, of incompatible elements; did not each element form a part of a single organic whole; like the roots and trunk, the branches and the blossoms of a single tree. A man, in a word, of integral Catholic life.

Students, like Rubens, of a Jesuit college, that is the Loyola I propose for your admiration, your inspiration, your imitation. You are living in a complicated, not to say a chaotic world. You will find, if you have not found it out already, that difficulties assail you on every side, from above, from below, from behind, from before; difficulties that are at once moral and social, intellectual and spiritual. If you are to meet—and defeat—the multiple attack of the modern world on the Christian soul, you must stand like the castle

of Loyola, four-square in every wind that blows.

Now the secret of such building has been left us in a little book that might be called the Jesuit College Code. It was the last will and testament of Ignatius Loyola, bequeathing to every Jesuit College, the soul and spirit of a saint and soldier. It is a program of an integral Catholic life. It deals with law and loyalty, with love and the Life of

God in the soul. It was meant to develop and to discipline a life that is rooted in reason, that is responsive to a noble cause, that is ready for sacrifice, that has doors wide open for the coming of the Holy Ghost. It begins with the mystery of the Creation, and ends with the mystery of Grace. In between, it deals with the Incarnation and the mystery of our Redemption. It begins with Creation, with the Fatherhood of God and the creaturehood of man. That is the solid rock on which all Catholic living must be built. That is the major premise of all sound spiritual logic. That is the foundamental fact from which we deduce our great responsibility, our duty of absolute and unwavering obedience to the law of God.

Not, of course, as though the law were something imposed upon us from without; like a suit of clothes that does not fit us. God's law is rather like the railroad tracks out there. Without tracks, a train would be, not a means of locomotion, but a wreck. Laws are like the levees along the Mississippi; without them the mighty river becomes a devastating flood. Law is a divine map for human living, a rational and revealed plan, for human and social order. Because God is our Creator, His Will, His law, His commands are the very conditions of our life and growth and ultimate perfection. And, therefore, a sense of law is the radical element of all Catholic living; and, therefore, the root idea of all Ignatian education.

Only, law is not the whole of life. Law is like a lighthouse in a storm. Law is directive; it is not dynamic. Law is like a signpost. It shows the way; it does not give us wheels. Law is like a map; it is not a motive. We humans need something more. We need something not merely for our head but for our hand. We need something to do. We need not merely a command but a cause, not merely a beacon but a flag; not merely a law, but a leader. That is why the Ignatian Code for Catholic colleges, after the mystery of our Creation, comes the mystery of the Incarnation; after the commands of God the Father, comes the campaign of

God the Son: after laws, comes a Cause,

And again, of course, not as though the Cause of Christ were something purely extrinsic to us, like the thousand and one blatant causes that clamor for our allegiance in a pagan world. The Cause of Christ, like the law of God, is something intrinsic to our nature. To fight for Christ, and, by extension, to fight for the Church of Christ, and by a still further extension, to fight for the creed and code and culture of Christendom against the disintegrating and corrosive forces in the chaos all around us is to fight for ourselves, is to defend the hearth and home of human nature; is to guard the very citadel of our souls. It is because the Cause of Christ is the cause of human nature that in all the nineteen hundred years since the Incarnation, no enemy has vet hauled down the flag of Christ. It is because the Cause of Christ is the cause of man that it has been able to call for followers in every age, in every clime, in every class. No traitor to the flag of Christ has ever died in full contentment; and no faithful follower of Christ has ever met his death with a sense of failure. But after the Cause of Christ, the Cross of Christ. After the mystery of the Incarnation, the mystery of our Redemption. We must rise from law and loyalty to love; from creaturehood and soldierhood to sacrificial priesthood.

Just what is it that makes a man fall in love with Christ on His Cross, with the beauty of a bleeding face and the gash in a wounded heart, is not to be told in human words. But the thing is there. The passionate gratitude first roused on Golgotha has gone on pulsing ever since. It is a passion stronger and stranger than any other passion known to history. A little of that passion must come into every Catholic life. There are moments of temptation in every human life when a man must cling to the Cross of Christ as he would cling to a plank in a storm at sea. There are for all of us pain and loss, defeat and disaster, sickness and the death of those we need and love. And in our utter darkness, in a maze of doubt and mist of tears, the only light that can lead us out is the light that shines from the Cross on Calvary. And in such moments the only attitude that can give life a meaning and a value is the attitude of utter self-surender, of unconditional dedication to the Will of God, of passionate allegiance to the Cross of Christ.

The Testament of Ignatius has one last word. It is a word that includes all that has gone before: Law, and Loyalty and Love. It is the word Life; Life in the sense of the Life of God communicated to the soul by Grace. Christian living is not complete until the Holy Ghost comes to dwell

within us as in a Temple. Grace is the keystone in the arch of Christian living. It would be vain for God to command us, to call us, to caress us, did He not communicate Himself to our souls by grace. Obeying the law of God, responding to the Call of Christ, carrying the Cross to Calvary, we would all die of spiritual starvation did not Grace come to feed the life of the soul. Without this life of Grace, Law would be but fetters on our feet, Loyalty to Christ an empty word, loving the Cross, a dangerous illusion.

That, then, is the lesson of Loyola's life. That, therefore, is the purpose of all Ignatian education. Loyola faced the fight of life four-square. His feet were set, like a marble pillar on a rock, solidly, on the narrow ledge of Law. His hands were trained to hold a banner and a sword, ready like a soldier for the fight. His heart was a lover's heart, dedicated like a priest's to sacrifice. His soul was a living

temple of the Holy Ghost.

And every man that passes through a Jesuit College is meant to develop a life like that; a life that is rooted in reason and responsibility to Law; a life that grows in solid and soldier-like devotion to the Cause of Christ; a life that is filled in every fiber with the sap of Grace, that produces, in the end, the fruit of everlasting Glory. He is meant to be a man of whom the world may say: "Wisdom reposes in his heart, and prudence in the words of his mouth."